



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

September 1, 2005

For immediate release

- 1. Iowa gas prices on the rise**
- 2. DNR theme is rivers and streams at Clay County Fair**
- 3. DNR offers updated erosion control manuals**

IOWA GAS PRICES ON THE RISE

DES MOINES – The effects of Hurricane Katrina are being felt across the state as gas prices hit the \$3 per gallon mark at some locations in Iowa.

Oil and natural gas production off the Gulf Coast has been disrupted, along with gasoline and diesel production at oil refineries along the Gulf Coast, sending oil and natural gas prices soaring and setting the stage for a spike in the retail cost of gasoline and diesel.

“We encourage consumers to shop around for the best price,” said Jennifer Moehlmann, energy analyst with the DNR. “The gasoline industry prices gasoline on a replacement cost basis, so the price motorists pay at the pump is what it costs the stations to buy the next gallon to replace it. So far, the prices at the pump are just reflecting the increases on the wholesale market. Consumers may have to pay more for a gallon of gasoline, but there is currently an adequate supply.”

Gas prices typically peak near the Labor Day weekend as drivers travel during the end of the summer driving season.

“The market is currently showing extreme volatility,” said Tami Foster, energy analyst with the DNR. “We have increased our monitoring efforts and will continue to watch the situation in the Gulf. The oil companies hope to reach the refineries before the end of the week. At that point, we should know more about the extent of the damage and how it will impact prices.”

To learn more about how gas prices are set and to help consumers improve fuel efficiency, the Iowa DNR has developed a reference guide on its Web site at www.iowadnr.com. Tips include driving more efficiently, considering alternate transportation options such as taking the bus or carpooling, and keeping vehicles tuned up and tires filled. Consumers can also choose ethanol at the pump, purchase E85 for flexible fuel vehicles and choose biodiesel blends for diesel vehicles.

If consumers are concerned about unfair pricing, they are encouraged to report it to the U.S. Department of Energy by visiting <http://gaswatch.energy.gov/> or by calling toll-free at (800) 244-3301.

For more information, contact Jennifer Moehlmann (515) 281-8518 or Jennifer Moehlmann@dnr.state.ia.us; or Tami Foster (515) 281-6558 or Tami.Foster@dnr.state.ia.us

###

DNR THEME IS RIVERS AND STREAMS AT CLAY COUNTY FAIR

SPENCER – Iowa’s rivers and streams are the focus of the DNR display at the Clay County Fair, Sept. 10 through 18, in Spencer. The DNR and 13 county conservation boards can be found in a renovated log cabin at the northeast corner of the fairgrounds.

New to the site this year is a stream, a wetland and associated native plants – all part of the cabin’s landscape and the Sundholm Environmental Educational Center. The stream and wetland display the importance of vegetated buffer strips along stream borders.

Visitors will find plenty to see and do. Stand next to an eagle’s nest when you visit the center and learn more about this majestic bird’s comeback from near extinction.

Inside the cabin, visit with DNR staff from law enforcement, fisheries, parks, wildlife and environmental services. They can answer questions on topics ranging from hunting and fishing to livestock and water quality issues. Or, view the river trash sculpture created in 2004 from collected trash in the Des Moines River basin.

Fairgoers can also visit the nearby gazebo for live animal demonstrations, to learn outdoor skills such as fly tying, or satisfy their curiosity about water bugs, mountain lions, trees, swans, livestock management, solar pumps and more. County naturalists, DNR staff members and others will present short talks and demonstrations. Check for programs and times near the log cabin.

Next door in the Agricultural Expo building, fairgoers can watch a stream demonstration, learning about stream flow and more about the Little Sioux River watershed.

During the weekends, volunteers and fairgoers can help turn garbage from the Little Sioux River into artwork. Ogden artist David Williamson will guide the efforts as volunteers melt, hammer and mold collected metals into sculpture. Williamson will be at the fair from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sept. 10, 11 and 17.

In June, more than 200 volunteers collected garbage from Spencer to Cherokee, retrieving nearly three tons of scrap metal from the Little Sioux River during Project AWARE (A Watershed Awareness River Expedition). The weeklong river cleanup invited volunteers to canoe and camp along the river, removing garbage and learning about water quality.

Prospective volunteers can visit www.iowaprojectaware.com for more information about the cleanup and its companion artistic effort. Visit www.keepersoftheland.org for information about other natural resources volunteer efforts, including a new online calendar of volunteer events.

For more information about the displays, contact Ken Hessenius at 712-252-4177. For more information about Project A.W.A.R.E., contact Merry Rankin at 515-281-0878 or Brian Soenen at 515-205-8587.

###

DNR OFFERS UPDATED EROSION CONTROL MANUALS

DES MOINES — Iowans looking for assistance with controlling erosion can turn to the DNR Web site for two recently updated DNR manuals.

“We lose a considerable amount of soil and sediment from construction sites and unstable streambanks each year in Iowa, damaging our valuable water resources,” said Bill Ehm with the DNR’s stormwater program. “We want to help Iowans control erosion, and providing them with the most up-to-date information is a critical part of that.”

The *Iowa Construction Site Erosion Control Manual*, originally published in 1994, contains a host of information to assist landowners, contractors and developers to reduce soil erosion and to prevent sediment from leaving construction sites. A total of 39 control measures are identified with purpose, installation and maintenance information for each.

The *How to Control Streambank Erosion* manual assists landowners, developers and contractors in selecting materials and methods to control streambank erosion. The 15 control measures in the manual include both structural and bioengineering methods.

Because these manuals will be updated on a regular basis, no paper copies will be produced. Rather, both manuals can be found on the Iowa DNR’s Web site at www.iowadnr.com/water/stormwater/. The manuals can also be found at ISU’s Center for Transportation Research and Education (CTRE) Web site at www.ctre.iastate.edu/erosion/.

The manuals were updated by James K. Cable of Iowa State University.

For more information, contact Bill Ehm at (515) 281-4701 or william.ehm@dnr.state.ia.us.